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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/696,826	10/25/2000	William M. Clark, Jr.	B-3650 617089-5	4721

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Richard P Berg Esq
LADAS & PARRY
5670 Wilshire Boulevard
Suite 2100
Los Angeles, CA 90036-5679

EXAMINER

TRAN, THIEN F

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2811

DATE MAILED: 02/19/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/696,826

Applicant(s)

CLARK, JR. ET AL.

Examiner

Thien F Tran

Art Unit

2811

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 9-14 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 2811

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election of claims 1-8 in Paper No. 7 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 8 recites the limitation "the second implanted region" in line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-8, insofar as in compliance with 35 USC 112, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Choi (US 6,215,158).

Choi discloses interconnection structure (Figs. 1-4 and 5B) for interconnecting two spaced-apart doped regions (140, 150) of a common conductivity type (n-type) in a device comprising a first doped region 130 in the device forming a conducting channel between the two spaced-apart doped regions, the conducting channel being of the common conductivity type (n-type) and bridging a region between the two spaced-apart regions; and a second doped region 121 of opposite conductivity type (p-type) in the device, the second doped region 121 being disposed between the two spaced-apart doped regions (140, 150) of common conductivity type and overlying the conducting channel 130.

The recitations "a camouflaged interconnection" and "in a manner which inhibits reverse engineering thereof" in the claim preamble specify an intended use or field of use is treated as nonlimiting since it has been held that in device claims, intended use must result in a structural difference between the claim invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claim invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. In re Casey, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967); In re Otto, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963). A claim containing a "recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus" if the prior art apparatus teaches all the structural limitations of the claim. Ex parte Masham, 2 USPQ2d 1647 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1987). It is clear that Choi discloses the same interconnection structure as claimed wherein a second doped region 121 is formed above the first doped region 130. As a result, what is true in the

present invention is also true in the Choi reference. The second dope region 121 of Choi inherently camouflages the buried interconnect 130 and inhibits reverse engineering.

Regarding claims 2 and 6, the second doped region 121 overlying the conducting channel 130 has a larger area, when view in a direction normal to a major surface of the device, than has the conducting channel.

Regarding claims 3 and 7, the two spaced-apart doped regions (140, 150) form source contacts, respectively of two separate field effect transistors.

Regarding claims 4 and 8, the second doped region 121 is provided in the device over regions (530) having no conducting channels formed therein.

Regarding claim 5, Choi also discloses further interconnect of the first and second source regions to other parts of the semiconductor and using an interconnect layer interconnecting drain regions together. Therefore, Choi discloses a plurality of interconnects each interconnecting selected doped regions of the plurality of spaced-apart doped regions, each interconnect comprising a buried conducting channel bridging a region between the selected doped regions. The doped region 121 is disposed over the plurality of interconnects. As a result, it inherently camouflage the majority of the plurality of interconnects.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thien F Tran whose telephone number is (703) 308-

Application/Control Number: 09/696,826

Art Unit: 2811

4108. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00AM - 3:30PM Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Thomas can be reached on (703) 308-2772. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-7722 for regular communications and (703) 308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

Tom Thomas

**TOM THOMAS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800**

tt
February 5, 2002